Request of Mahila Mandal, Nandla for sanction of fund under PMGSY

†3537. SHRI ANIL SHARMA : Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the amount sanctioned by Government under PMGSY to Himachal Pradesh during the year 2002-2003 alongwith the names of schemes;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the head of Mahila Mandal, Nandla had sent an application sanctioning the fund under PMGSY;

(c) whether it is also a fact that no action has been taken so far on the demands made by Mahila Mandal, Nandla; and

(d) whether Government propose to provide financial grant on priority basis in order to fulfil the demands of the said "Mahila Mandal" ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU) : (a) An amount of Rs. 104.57 crores was sanctioned during 2002-2003 for Himachal Pradesh under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY).

(b) and (c) As per the guidelines of the PMGSY, the list of road works of a State is to be finalised each year by the District Panchayats through a consultative process involving lower level Panchayati Institutions and elected representatives. The guidelines do not envisage receipt of individual road proposals at the Central Government level.

(d) Does not arise in view of the guidelines.

Funds to Gujarat under Old Age Pension

3538. SHRI AHMED PATEL : Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Gujarat is the only State in the country giving monthly Old Age Pension at the rate of Rs. 250 per pensioner;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government are reducing the funds released to the State for this purpose year after year;

(c) if not, the details of funds released to the State for Old Age Pensions during the last four years, year-wise; and

(d) the remedial measures Government propose to take to enable the State to pay the pension at the same rates in future?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL) : (a) No, Sir. The State Government of Maharashtra is also making a monthly payment at the rate of Rs. 250/- per old age pensioner.

(b) The National Social Assistance Programme consisting of the National Old Age Pension Scheme and the National Family Benefit Scheme stands transferred to the State Plan alongwith the Annapurna Scheme with effect from the year 2002-2003. Funds are released to States by Ministry of Finance for all the three transferred schemes in a combined manner leaving the choice of the Scheme(s) to States in accordance with their needs.

(c) The funds released to the State of Gujarat under the National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS) during the years 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 were Rs. 320.92 lakh, Rs. 370.53 lakh and Rs. 338.63 lakh respectively and were based on the progress of expenditure by the State.

(d) With the transfer of the schemes, the States/UTs have flexibility in the choice, parameters and implementation of the transferred Schemes.

Economic activities of women of Andhra Pradesh

3539. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY : Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the women in rural areas of Andhra Pradesh have under the aegis of the UNDP's South Asian Poverty Alleviation Programme, been organizing themselves as Self Help Groups (SHGs) for reducing their poverty and attain economic prosperity by income generating activities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government would like to provide generous assistance to the State Government and encourage them to replicate the programme to other parts of the States and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU) : (a) and (b) UNDP's South Asian Poverty Alleviation Programme was under implementation in 20 mandals in three drought prone districts *i.e.* Kurnool, Mahaboobnagar and Ananthapur of Andhra Pradesh from 1995 to 2000. Under this Programme, emphasis was on organizing the rural women into Self Help Groups (SHGs) through the process of social mobilization, their training and capacity building and provision of